INFORMATION REPORT

DATE DISTR. 21 September 1948

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COUNTRY Ecuador

- Communist leaders look with satisfaction upon the prospects of Galo Plaza's opposition to the Party and anticipate that sooner or later the issue will be clearly drawn and the Party will have to fight. Within the Central Committee this subject has been discussed and consideration has been given as to the course of action the Party will follow in the event it is declared illegal by the Government. Certain leaders stated that any action taken against the Party will only favor its cause and that it could then act in ways which are presently denied to it. The leaders added that the Party could work more efficiently, once forced underground.
- 2. It was proposed in the Central Committee that the Party publish and distribute a series of handbills which would provoke the Government into taking action against the Party. This proposal was well received, and mentionwas made that the Party had means at its disposal for sending propaganda, which would receive wide publicity, to other countries outside of Ecuador.
- 3. On 31 August copies of a handbill prepared by the Communists were detected. The text of this handbill was anti-Plaza-Sotomayor and called for an opposition coalition which would include Liberals and Socialists. On 2 September 1948 while Gustavo Becerra and other Communists were preparing these handbills for distribution in Becerra's bookstore, three members of the Guardia Civil entered the shop and seized the entire lot.
- 4. Communist leaders were incensed over the strong-arm tactics of the Guardia Civil. Their first reaction was to make an issue of it, but later it was felt best to drop the matter for the time being. Meanwhile Becerra, who is head of the Communist Party intelligence activities, is engaged in investigating how the Guardia Civil knew about the handbills and who instructed them to take this action.

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